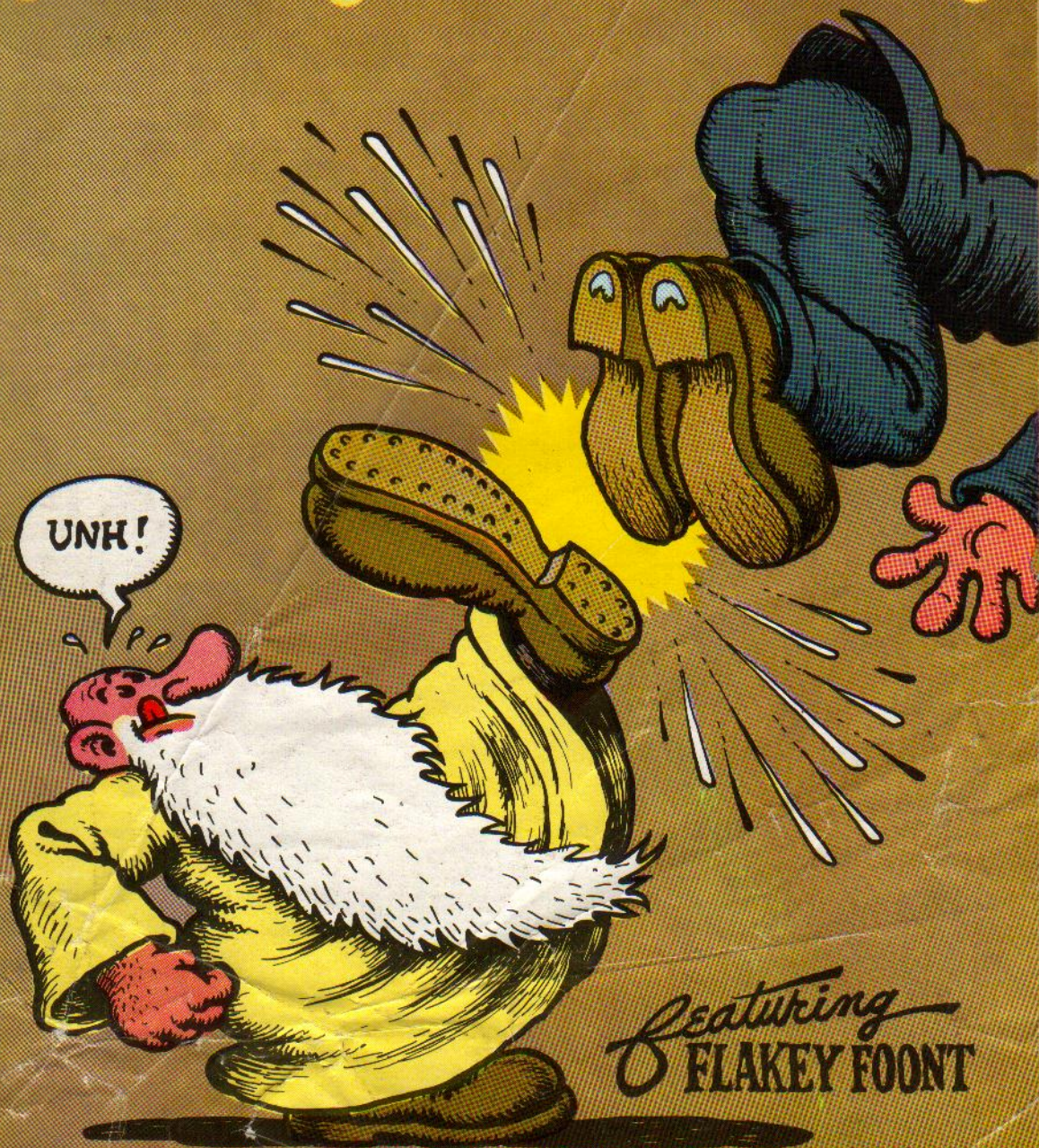


APEX
NOVELTIES

THE PRINCE OF
PEACE BOOK

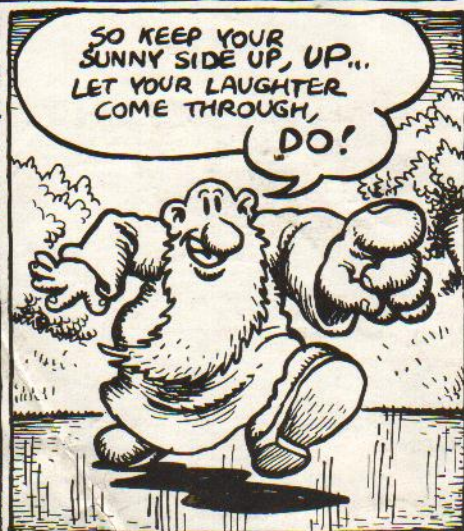
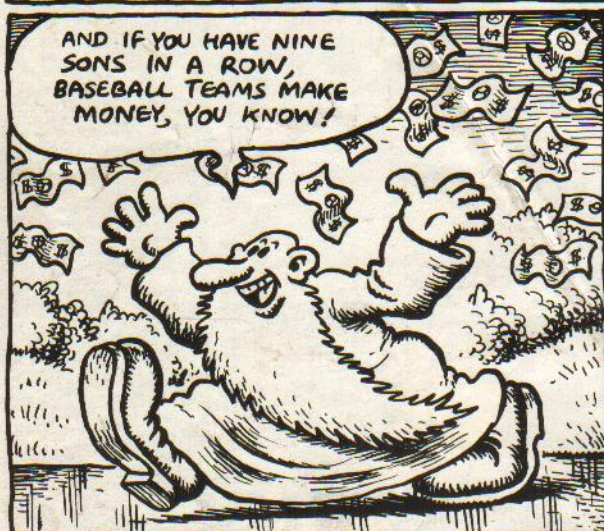
75¢

Mr. Natural



Featuring
FLAKEY FOONT

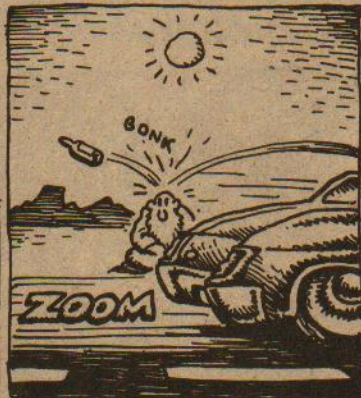
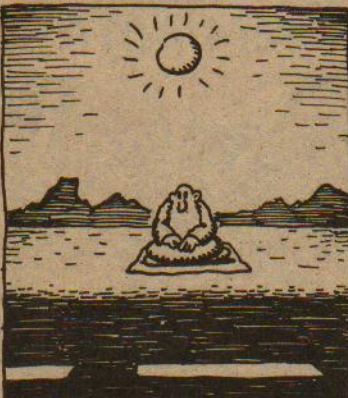
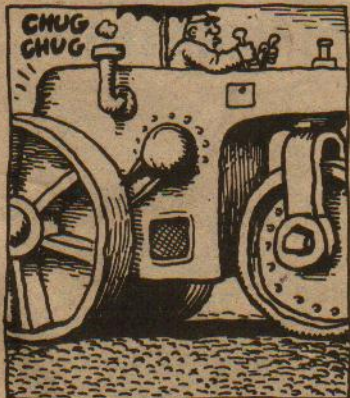
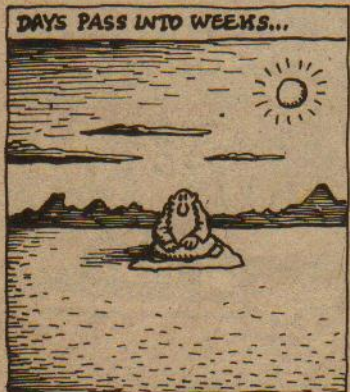
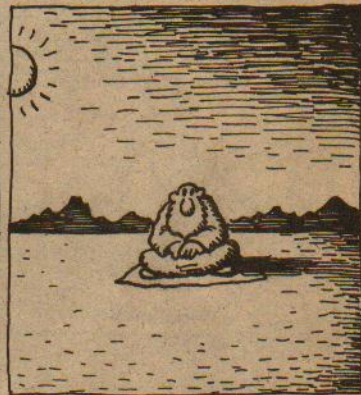
R. CRUMB 1976

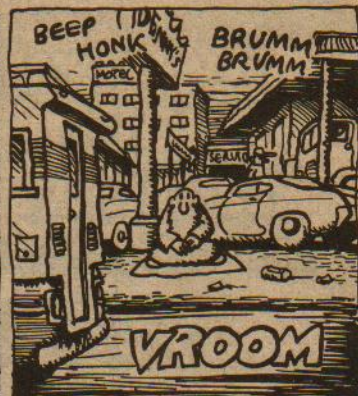
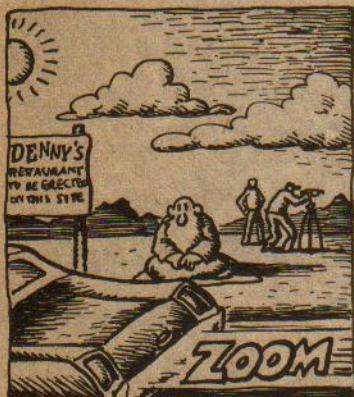


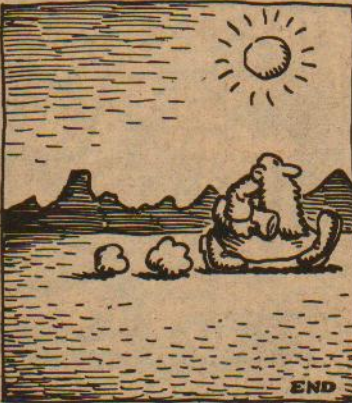
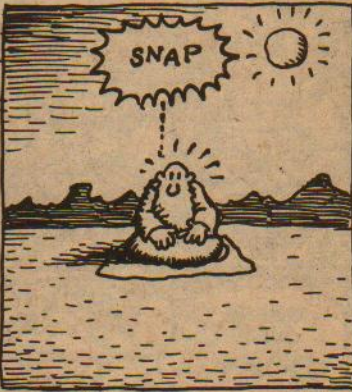
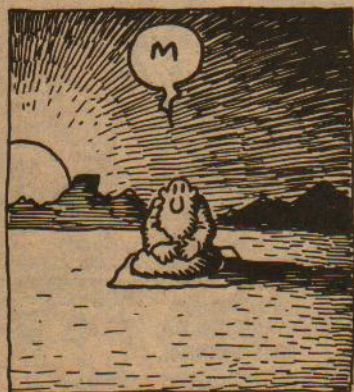
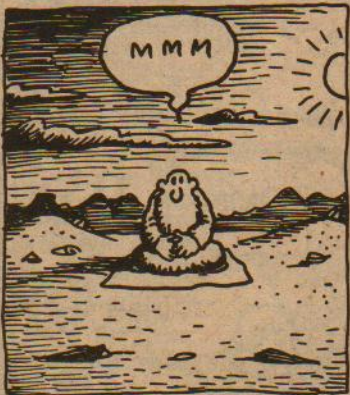
Mr. Natural's 719th MEDITATION

THIS LOOKS LIKE
AS GOOD A SPOT
AS ANY...

THE OLD DESERT RAT IS
BACK ON THE JOB OUT THERE
IN THE BARREN WASTES!!







END

MR. NATURAL

and
SHUMAN
the
HUMAN
in
"OM SWEET OM"

OOMMM



OOMMM

WUD DA HELL IZ DIS?

'OME, 'OME ON TH' RANGE HAW HAW!

OOMMM

O-OM MY ACHING BACK!

HAVE YOU GOT A BACK ACHE?

OH CUT IT OUT, WILL YOU?

YOU'RE SICK... OOMMM

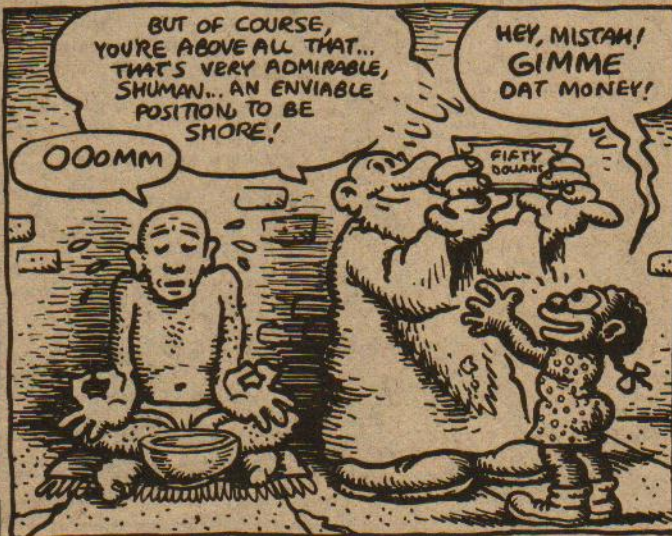
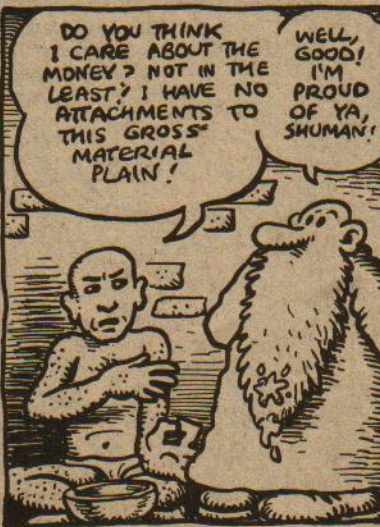
SICK!! WHY I OUSHTA—

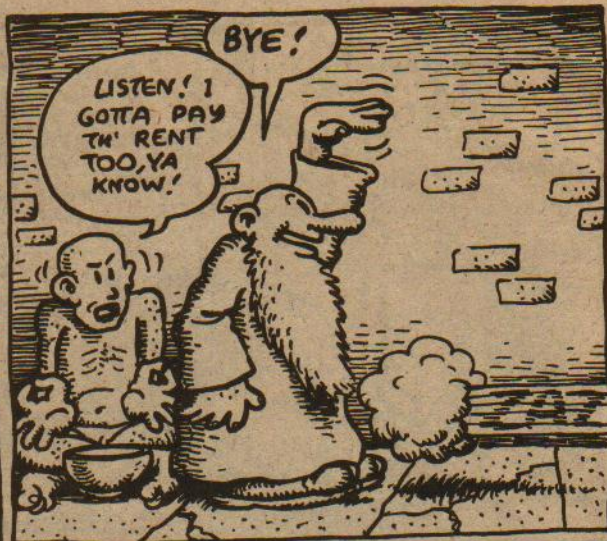
GO ON! I'D JUST SMILE! IT'S YOUR KARMA, MAN! SO GO AHEAD...

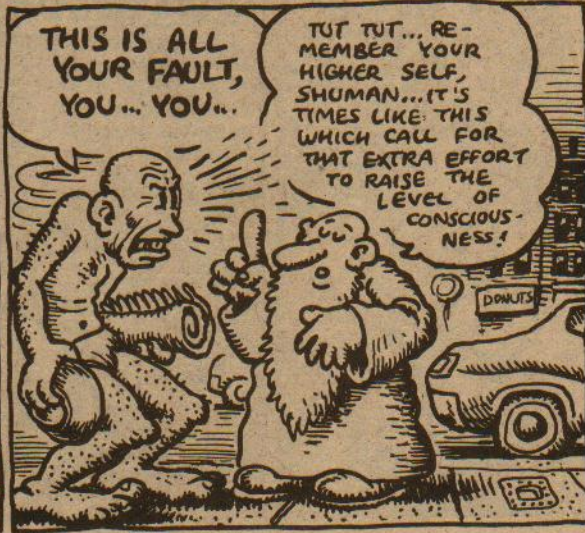
NEVERMIND NEVERMIND... GO BACK TO YOUR MUMBO JUMBO

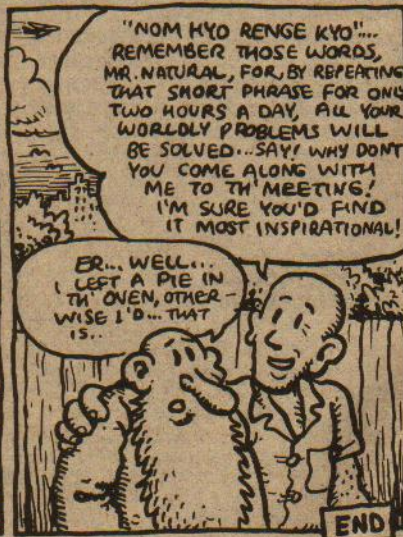
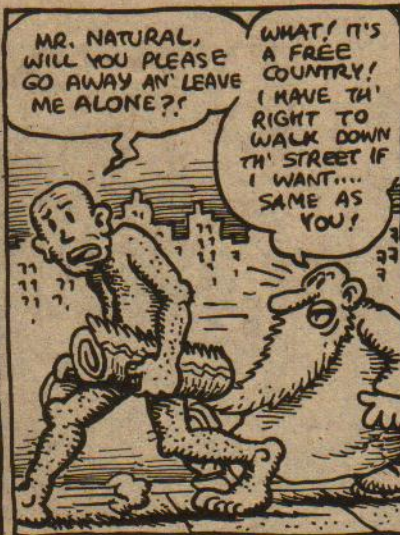
YOU'RE SO MESSED UP, MR. NATURAL... OOOMMM

?









The Origins of MR. NATURAL



THIS TINY BATTERED PHOTOGRAPH MAY BE THE FIRST ONE EVER TAKEN OF MR. NATURAL, BUT THE EXPERTS HAVE DIFFERENT OPINIONS. BACK OF PHOTO IS INSCRIBED WITH THE NAME "FRED" BUT IS NOT MR. NATURAL'S HANDWRITING.



EARLIEST KNOWN PHOTOGRAPH THAT IS DEFINITELY THE VENERABLE ONE IS THIS PORTRAIT SIGNED "F. NATURAL, WESSINGTON SPRINGS, S.D., 1908." HANDWRITING EXPERTS HAVE VERIFIED THE SIGNATURE, AND AN OLD-TIMER STILL LIVING IN ALCESTER, SOUTH DAKOTA, RECALLS A MAN NAMED FRED NATURAL WHO JOBBED AROUND THAT AREA IN THOSE DAYS. HE REMEMBERS HIM AS A "NICE QUIET FELLOW."

MANY OF YOU Mr. Natural fans have asked that we run an article on the man's past life and early background. Certainly a life history on Mr. Natural is a fascinating idea, and so, with a certain amount of skepticism, we set about investigating. Our doubts were confirmed as we ran in to one blind alley after another, and finally were forced to abandon trying to fill in several large gaps in his past. Whole decades, in fact, are entirely missing. A frustrating experience for the conscientious historian and Mr. Natural enthusiast.

His childhood is completely clouded in obscurity. His birthplace and birthdate are entirely unknown. No records have been found, and no relatives, and, of course, no one has been able to squeeze an ounce of information out of the Old Man Himself (except, according to him, that his father is still alive, and well, but he won't tell us where). All knowledge of his life has been gathered without his help or support, and the whole

project leaves him "Cold," as he puts it.

The 1908 photograph is the earliest proof we have of his existence. The photo was sent to us by Mrs. Ada Cooper, a Mr. Natural fan, who found the old picture in a trunk full of her mother's belongings. Mrs. Cooper says she can never remember her mother, now deceased, ever mentioning that she knew Mr. Natural.

As for his age at the time the photograph was taken, he appears to have been between thirty-five and forty, which would make him close to one-hundred years old today!!

Not a clue exists as to his whereabouts between 1908 and 1921, the year our wild young wiseman moved to Chicago, where he stayed up to 1929. Here we lose track of the elusive sage for another seven years. But we managed to hunt down several people who knew him in that toddlin' town in the twenties, and so have gathered a fairly complete picture of Mr. Natural's adventures through that lurid decade.

In the fall of 1921 Mr. Natural got a job in a drugstore as an errand runner on the near north side. (Some believe the drugstore was a front for a speak-easy and that it was Natch's job to deliver

the illegal booze to thirsty customers, but this is mere here-say. It may have been while in the employ of this pharmacy that he became interested in the drug field, for two years later, in 1923, he was promoting a "Wonder Drug" that he claimed could cure all "mental and spiritual ills" and had a small but enthusiastic cult of followers, mostly women, who endorsed this claim vigorously. Going under the name of "Dr. Von Natürlich," he travelled through the midwest for a short time, selling the "wonder elixir" and "healing" the sick, until he was arrested in Peoria, Illinois, convicted of fraud and spent six months in the county jail. There are still those who applaud Dr. Von Natürlich's wonder-drug, and curse the day his entire stock was confiscated by the police. Mrs. Vicki Hodgetts, now of Los Angeles, said to me when I talked with her: "Well, yes! It certainly was a wonder drug! I know it was, because I was absolutely neurotic! I was miserable, believe me! Then along comes this Dr. Von Natürlich...and...well, I've been a very happy person ever since!!"


The police file on the case, which was still in the Peoria Courthouse, states, "Although purported to possess potent powers over the mind and spirit, a close scrutiny of this so-called 'Wonder Drug' under a microscope has proven without a shadow of a doubt that it is nothing more than plain ordinary tap-water."

A Great New Message of
HEALTH

"A HEALTHY MIND MEANS A HEALTHY BODY" says Dr. Von Natürlich, the Internationally Acclaimed Expert on the Human Mind, Body & Spirit

Hear the Man who has rebuilt thousands of broken lives by his scientifically proved NEW METHOD!

FREE LECTURES
TRINITY AUDITORIUM
AUGUST 8 & 9
8:00 P.M.



HANDBILL SHOWING "DR. VON NATÜRLICH" IN THE YEAR 1924

After his release from jail, he turned his talents to magic, and for a few months performed his feats of mystic hoodoo in Vaudeville houses around Chicago. He was billed as "Mr. Natural the Magnificent". This career, too, met with opposition from the conservatives of that primitive time, and his show was cut short one night by a panic-stricken theatre manager who ordered the curtain brought down on Mr. Natural's "Unnatural Act" which he was about to perform on an hypnotized lady participant. He was blacklisted and never performed as a magician again.

Evidently, he was undaunted by past defeats, and in the spring of 1926 he somehow managed to get together a small dance band and began a successful career in the music business as a band-leader.

This band was known as "Mr. Natural and his Seven Lyrical Lechers" at first and later the group was enlarged to thirteen members under the name of "Mr. Natural's Lyrical Lechers and their Orchestra". They were a popular group around Chicago for almost two years, playing in roadhouses and Cafes, and an occasional College Prom or Hotel Ballroom. Mr. Natural himself wrote many of the songs in their repertoire and even played an assortment of unlikely instruments. Their arrangements had a strangely unique sound as evidenced by a few surviving records.



TWO RECORDS CUT BY MR. NATURAL'S BAND IN THE SUMMER OF 1928



It was an era of easy money and within a year, Mr. Natural had accumulated a small fortune. In 1928 he was living in a large plush home in a Chicago suburb, owned two Packard limousines, employed the services of a maid, butler and chauffeur and threw huge wild parties.

Then, suddenly, and unexpectedly, he gave it all away to some bum he'd picked up on the street, typical of the restless, unfathomable nature of his perfect being. His friends were totally baffled by this sudden change, and when he moved to a cheap skid-row hotel, he gradually lost contact with his former well-to-do whoopee-making friends.

Harry Baines, the drummer in the band, says "We had some good times back then. I'll never understand why Natchy threw it all away. Everybody thought he was nuts! Of course, two years later, the rest of us went down the tubes along with him!"

"It looked to me liked he just flipped his noodle!"—Joey Norton, banjo player in the group.

"I still can't figure it! I used to think he was a smart operator 'til he pulled that stunt! And he even had it put in writing! Crackers!"—Doris Hall, wife of Cafe owner Monte Hall.

From the winter of '28-'29, when Mr. Natural moved to skid-row, until a full seven years later, nothing is known of him.



**THIS PHOTOGRAPH,
MADE IN DEC., 1933,
CONTAINS A PERSON**

WHO MIGHT BE MR. NATURAL, ACCORDING TO THE SAN MATEO CHAPTER OF THE MR. NATURAL SOCIETY, WHO FOUND THE PICTURE. "WHO ELSE COULD IT BE?" SAYS THE GROUP'S PRESIDENT. INDEED, THERE IS A STRONG RESEMBLANCE IN THE FEATURES OF THE DOWN-AND-OUT CHAP ABOVE TO THOSE OF THE LIVING SAINT. PHOTO WAS TAKEN IN CHICAGO, BUT NO ONE HAS TURNED UP WHO KNEW HIM THERE AFTER 1929.

On 1936 he popped up again on the west coast, where he met another great American folk hero and all-around geek, the "Old Pooperoo". The Old Poop was working as a fruit picker in Central California in the late thirties, and he and Mr. Natural crossed paths in a working-man's bar in Modesto one night in October, 1936. They became close friends and traveled together, picking up a few dollars now and then working in the fields or on construction jobs, getting drunk and whoring and hopping freight cars all over the United States.

"Natural was a good ol' boy, yep...we went through plenty of troubles together, you bet! Why, we musta been in every calaboose in this land of Liberty, from Maine to California and back again! We fought about women and cried on each others' shoulder over lost romances...we talked about old times back home for hours, an' when we had a few bucks we lived like royal Turks! But they was generally tough times, so I got in with some sharpies in Philly and for awhile there I was rakin' it in. This was around '39 or '40. I didn't see Natural much after that. I guess I got too Booshwah fer him. He wuz uneasy around my business associates. I s'pose we did put on some airs...haw haw...strictly high-hat! So he got bored and headed back west an' I didn't see him again, liked I said. But I started hearing stories about him gettin' in with small time crooks an' dope fiends, so I sent him some cash to come east an' get in the business with me, but of course he just spent the money and

wrote askin me for more and more 'til I got fed up and wouldn't send him any. I figured he was Hell-bent on a dead-end course. Last I heard, he wuz runnin around with a tough twerp from Tulsa name of Judy Holiday...not th' same one as th' movie star, but a nice lookin' dish from what I heard." No one seems to know what became of this Tulsa sweetheart.

When the War broke out Mr. Natural once again vanished from the scene. He has talked vaguely of this period of his life, but will not give us any specific details (He claims he can't remember). By his own admission, if we can trust him, he was in the Middle and Far East through the war years and after. He says he was in India, traveled to China, the Himalayas, Tibet and Afghanistan, where he got work as a Taxi driver, and, in his own words "learned many strange and wonderful things" in those distant lands.

He returned to America in 1953 "for some stupid reason" and loafed around for a year "getting very depressed about the world situation," he tells us, and so, renouncing all worldly pursuits and pleasures, he retreated to Death Valley in 1955 to "start anew."

In June, 1960, a small group of ardent devotees formed the first chapter of the Mr. Natural Fan Clubs of America in Southern California. They kept close ties with his spiritual development in the desert, as well as looking after his financial matters. In 1965 he began making speaking tours, visiting Colleges and Universities, and by 1966 he was already coming into his own as a recognized powerful spiritual force on this planet, a great religious leader, and a living model of Godlike perfection for all of Humanity to emulate. His moving words of wisdom have been translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian, Norwegian, Dutch and Japanese, and his presence on this globe has changed it for the better, as we all know!!

**THE OLD
POOPEROO
AND MR.
NATURAL
IN CAYENNE,
WYOMING,
1938**



**MR. NATURAL
WITH A GROUP
OF EARLY
DISCIPLES
IN LOS AN-
GELES
CALIFORNIA,
MARCH
1962**

The MR. NATURAL DRAWING CONTEST

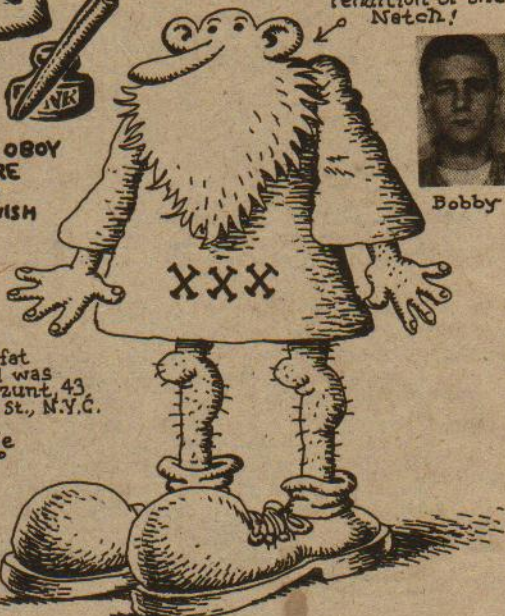
WELL, THE ENTRIES ARE ALL IN AND, BOY OBOY WAS IT TOUGH TO PICK A WINNER! THERE WERE SO MANY MANY FINE DRAWINGS OF MR. NATURAL SENT IN BY YOU FANS! WE WISH WE HAD ROOM TO PRINT THEM ALL!!

FIRST PRIZE

goes to Bobby Bankhurst, 17, 315 S. Nevada St., Oceanside, California, for his imaginative rendition of the Netch!



Bobby



SECOND PRIZE

for this cute, fat little Mr. Natural was given to Abie Gazunt, 43, of 641 Orchard St., N.Y.C.



Abie



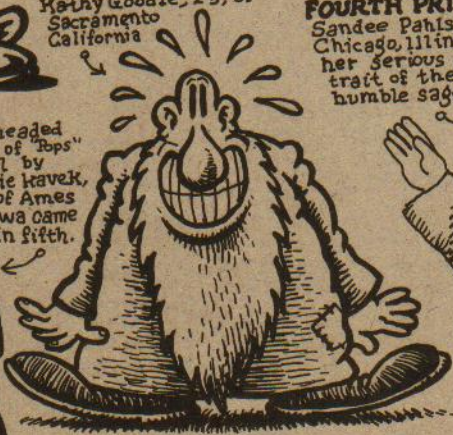
THIRD PRIZE

was won by this zany drawing by Kathy Goodie, 23, of Sacramento California

FOURTH PRIZE went to Sandee Pahls, 23, of Chicago, Illinois, for her serious portrait of the humble sage.



Teeny-headed version of "Bps" Natural by Tootsie Kavek, 13, of Ames Iowa came in fifth.



Sixth place was taken by Danie Sladovski of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, for her rather pleasant drawing of Mr. Natural

Ranking seventh was this strange approach to the bearded sage by Sanford Goines of Lewiston, Idaho



Dwark Farkwarr of Nova Scotia landed the eighth spot with this simple but tasteful Mr. Natural



RUNNERS-UP:



Candy Yamamoto, 19
San Francisco, California



Janet Shapiro, 24
Buffalo, New York



Melvin Smurdley, 37
Evansville, Indiana



E.J. McEnelly, 39
Perth Amboy, New Jersey



Carol Kraft, 8
North Platte, Nebraska



Arnie Needleman, 28
Brooklyn, New York



Barbara —?—, ?
San Anselmo, California



Neil Schneiderman, 26
Cleveland Heights, Ohio



Gary Arlington, 30
Nome, Alaska



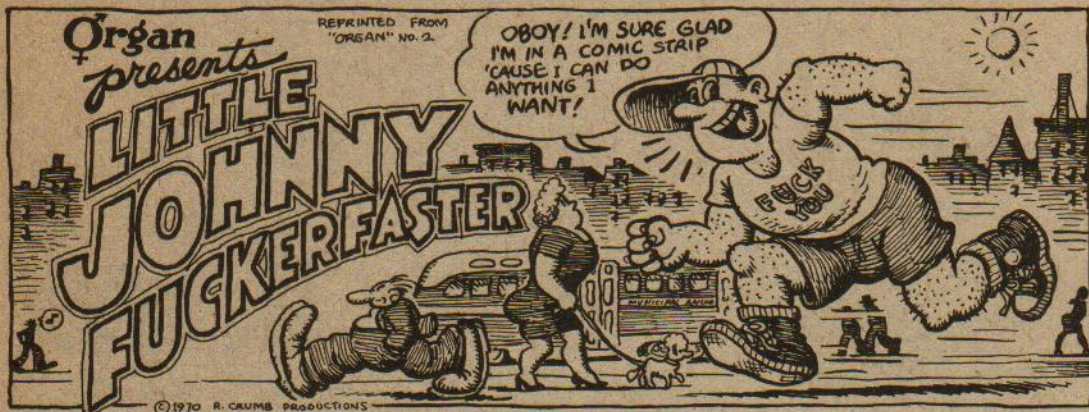
G.V. Crumb, Jr., 28
Havertown, Pennsylvania

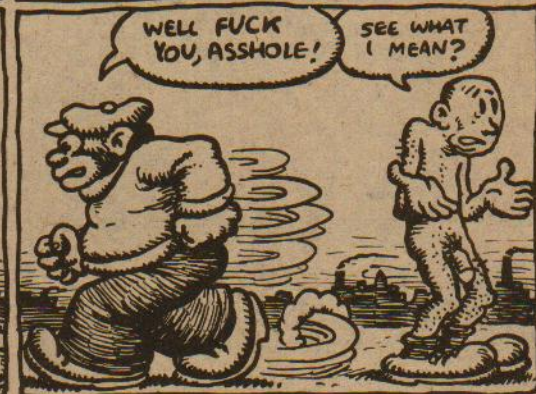
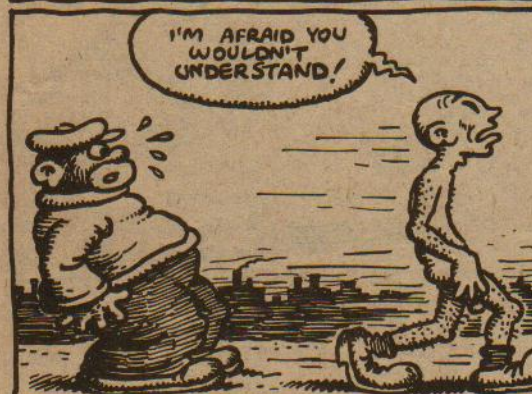
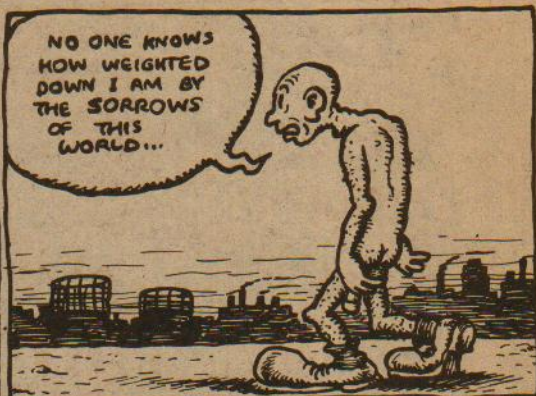
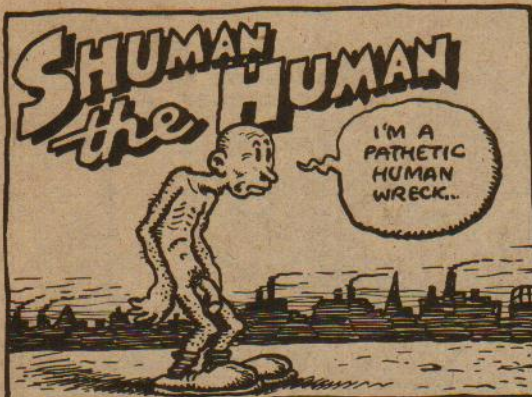


Mrs. R.H. Morgan, 48
Chicago, Illinois



Mike Britt, 26
Tigard, Oregon





Mr. Natural

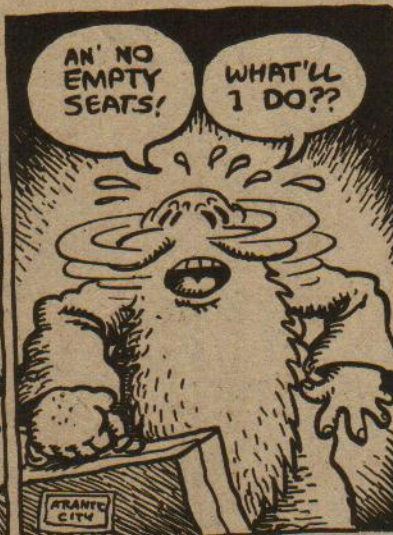
in

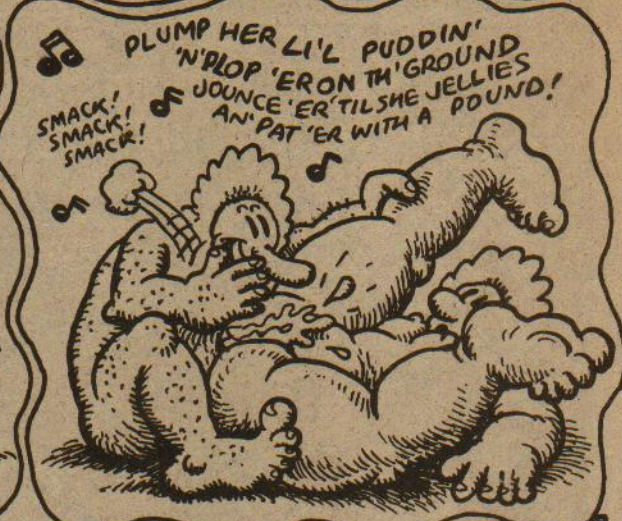
"ON THE BUM AGAIN"

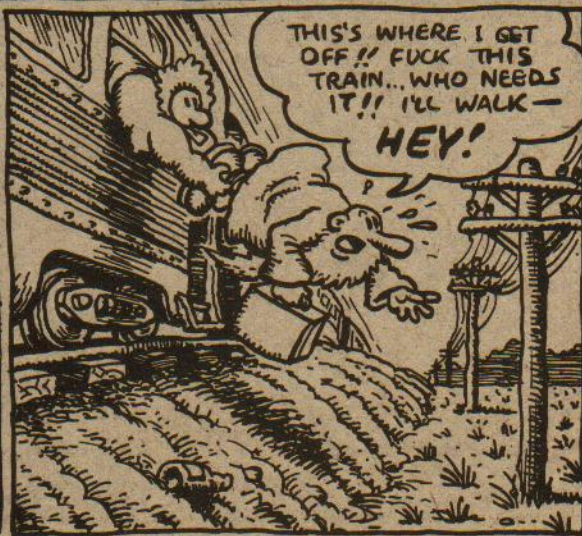
© 1970
R. CRUMB
Productions

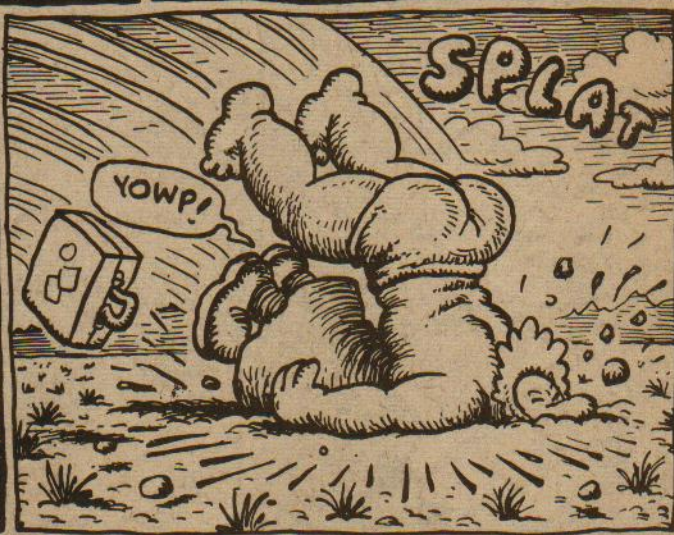


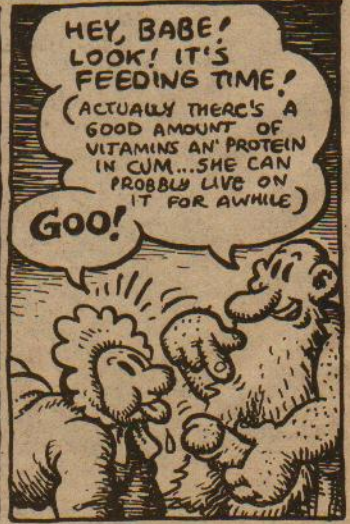
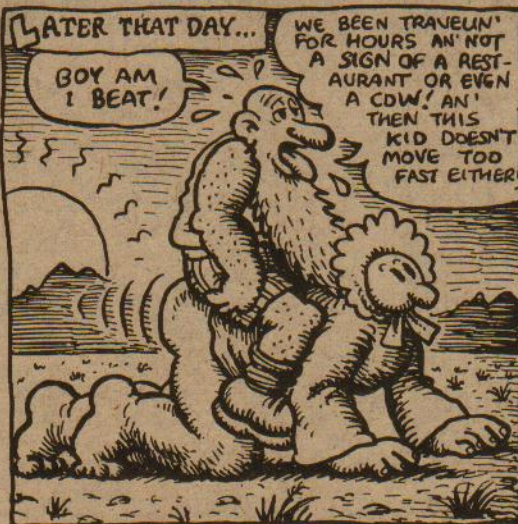
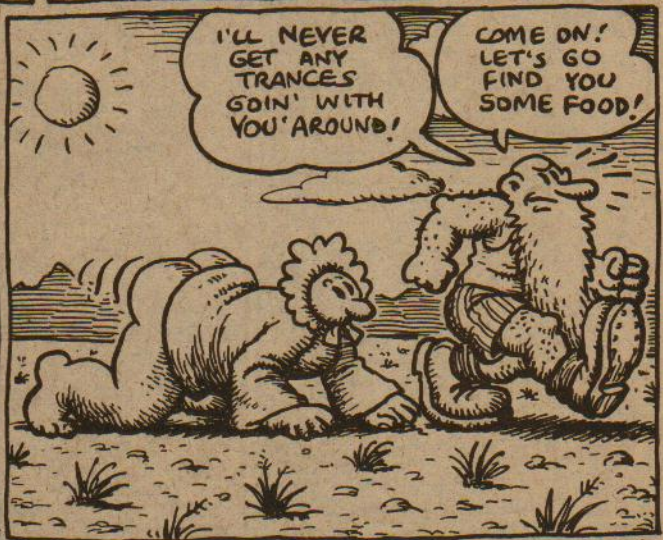
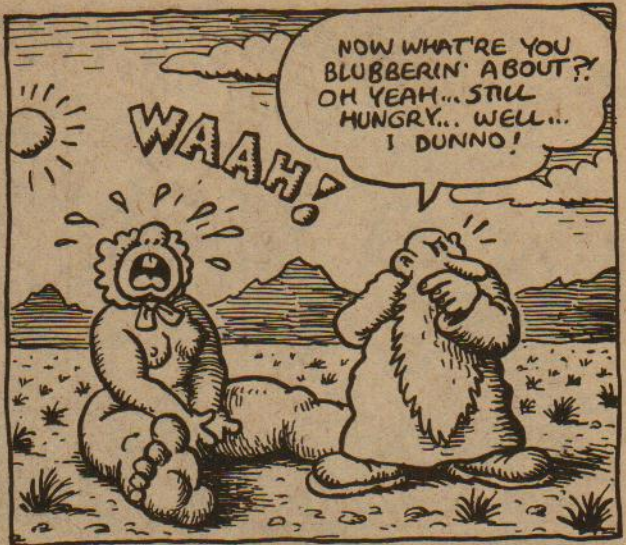


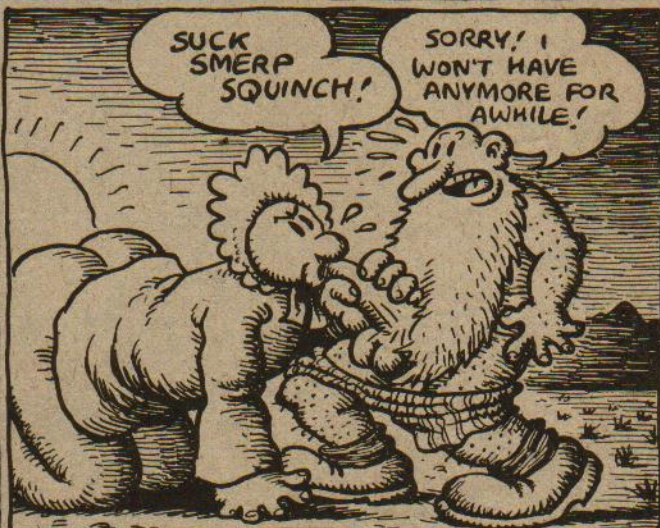


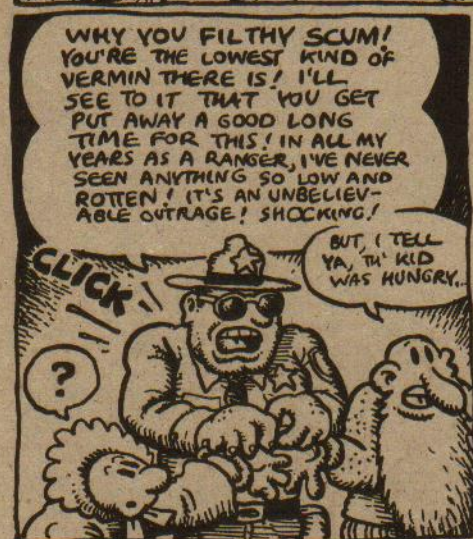
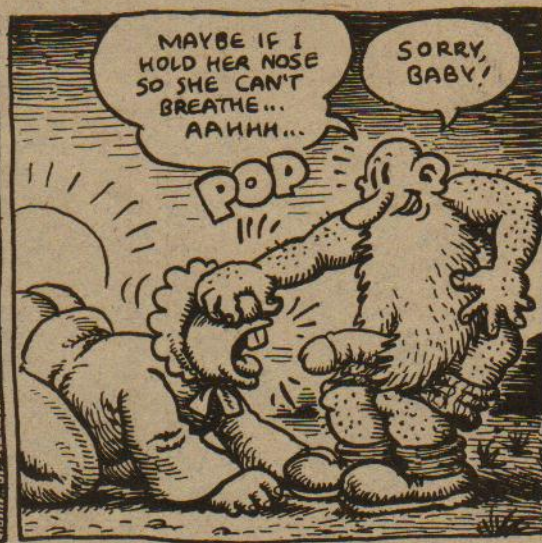












Mr. Natural's OLD MAN

featuring
Li'l Cute

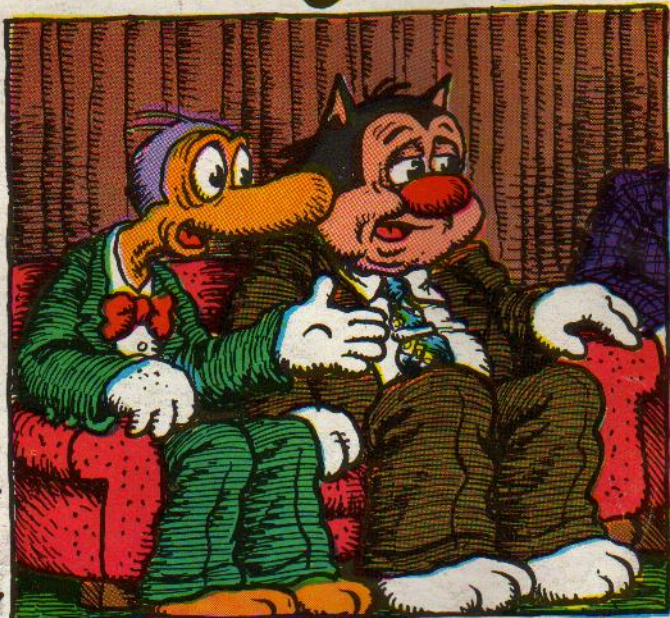


Great Cartoon Characters of the Past:

Where Are They Now

GANDY GOOSE and SOURPUSS

ANYBODY WHO WAS A READER OF THE OLD PAUL TERRY'S TERRY TOONS YEARS AGO WILL NEVER FORGET THESE TWO LOVABLE CLOWNS, WHOSE HILARIOUS ROUTINES LIVENED UP THE PAGES OF WHAT WAS OFTEN A FAIRLY DULL LINE OF COMICS. BOTH GANDY AND SOURPUSS RETIRED FROM THE COMICS AROUND THE TIME ST. JOHN DISCONTINUED PUBLISHING TERRYTOONS SOME FIFTEEN YEARS AGO. MIGHTY MOUSE AND HECKLE and JECKLE ARE NOW ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THE PAUL TERRY GROUP.



GANDY GOOSE AND SOURPUSS MADE THEIR LAST PUBLIC APPEARANCE AS GUESTS ON THE "TONIGHT" SHOW IN NOVEMBER, 1966

SOURPUSS (RIGHT) IN HIS HEYDAY AS THE LOVABLE CONMAN AND (BELOW) WITH HIS WIFE OUTSIDE THEIR MODEST BUNGALOW IN SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, TAKEN SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH OF A HEART ATTACK IN MAY, 1968.



"SOURPUSS"
in "Arctic Antics" from
Paul Terry's Comics
MARCH 1953



BELOW, GANDY GOOSE AS HE LOOKS TODAY. A RESIDENT OF LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA FOR TEN YEARS, HE IS NOW PART OWNER OF A USED CAR BUSINESS. IN A RECENT INTERVIEW, HE SAID RATHER WISTFULLY "I'M EXCITED ABOUT THE COMICS REVIVAL, BUT THESE NEW FELLOWS CAN'T SEEM TO PUT OUT THE KIND OF FUNNIES SOURPUSS AND ME CREATED BACK IN THE OLD DAYS!"

